

anew, and we rejoice in the knowledge that the God who came to Earth that night in Bethlehem is with us still and will remain with us forever.

Christmas is a season of hope and joy, a time to give thanks for the blessing of Christ's birth and for the blessings that surround us every day of the year. We have much to be thankful for in this country, and we have a responsibility to help those in need. Jesus calls us to help others, and acts of kindness toward the less fortunate fulfill the spirit of the Christmas season.

On Christmas, we pray for freedom, justice, and peace on Earth. We remember

those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and for our freedom, and we ask for God's blessing on their loved ones. We ask God to watch over all of our men and women in uniform. Many are serving in distant lands, helping to advance the cause of freedom and peace. Our entire Nation is grateful to them and prays for their safe return.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a blessed and merry Christmas.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah 2005 *December 19, 2005*

I send greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of lights.

More than 2,000 years ago, the Jewish people led a revolt against oppressors who forbade them to pray, study the Torah, or observe their religious customs. Led by Judah Maccabee and fueled by their faith, their small army triumphed over tyranny. When they reclaimed the desecrated Temple and prepared it to be purified and rededicated, the holy oil that should have lasted only one day instead burned for eight days. During Hanukkah, Jews around the world honor this miracle by lighting the menorah, a symbol of hope shining through darkness.

As Jewish Americans prepare to light the Hanukkah candles this year, we give thanks

for God's many blessings and His watch and care over our Nation. We remember our many military families and ask God's special blessing on those who have lost loved ones in freedom's cause. We are grateful for the courage and commitment of America's men and women in uniform and pray for their safety as they serve around the world to spread peace and liberty.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a joyful Hanukkah.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa 2005 *December 19, 2005*

I send greetings to those observing Kwanzaa.

African Americans and people around the world reflect on African heritage during